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9 July 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR:

[redacted]  
Executive Assistant to the DDCI

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SUBJECT : SAVA Input to the Director's Briefing  
Memorandum

The following SAVA activities or matters seem to me to warrant inclusion in the consolidated memorandum you are preparing to brief the Director on what has transpired during his absence.

1) Three meetings with Secretary Laird (on June 23, June 30 and July 7). These sessions are now regularly running an hour and a half to two hours. All devoted to Vietnamese matters save that at the 23 June meeting Laird brought up the matter of the transcript of the Fulbright hearings in a way that reflected a misunderstanding on his part of how the transcript was to be handled. Laird made it very clear that he did not want any reference to the CIA budget or personnel strength or the budgets/strengths of any intelligence community component such as DIA or NSA. Views he expressed at this meeting were cabled to you.

2) Close relations with Sullivan's office and -- through him and Walsh -- Rogers' office continued. State kept pressing for our promised assessment of the infiltration matter. I fended Sullivan off until all of us here felt sufficient data (positive and negative) was in hand to frame judgments. I then got work started on a memo that did not focus exclusively on the infiltration question but, instead, looked at Hanoi's current strategic planning in light of all available evidence, including infiltration data -- a procedure that seemed essential if the infiltration question was to be seen in proper perspective. Went through several drafts and was published on 3 July under title, "Hanoi's Short Term Intentions." Distribution was tightly restricted. Copies were sent over Gen. Cushman's signature to Rogers, Laird, Kissinger, Wheeler, Lowrance (acting for Carroll), Hughes and Carter. Copies sent over my signature to [redacted] (NSA) and Doolin (ISA). No other distribution. Sullivan told me Rogers liked the memo and considered it just what he needed. Laird told me he found it first rate and most helpful. Same message came from Wheeler via my contact on his staff. Gen. Cushman said President had indicated at 7 July NSC meeting he (Nixon) had read memo carefully and commended it.

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3) We had a small teapot tempest generated out of Kissinger's office, trivial in itself but symptomatic of a problem that needs continuous watching. On 30 June, Abrams sent in an Eyes Only re-arguing MACV's case for Cambodia as a supply channel in a manner that made it appear that MACV had lots of new evidence. This cable was not initially released to CIA, but it was sent to the White House and passed to the President, who apparently dressed down Kissinger for not previously passing on this "new information." Kissinger called General Cushman and Al Haig called me. When we finally got the text of the cable, there proved to be nothing in it not already covered in the Joint CIA/DIA briefing given Kissinger on 16 June. When I next saw Laird (7 July), I warned of the potential mischief that could be caused by circulating raw intelligence at high and highest levels. Laird professed to agree with me, but this problem is unlikely to go away.

4) Through a post-USIB conversation between General Cushman and Admiral Lowrance, and partly as a result of (3) above, Admiral Lowrance and I have worked out an informal arrangement under which each will keep the other advised re Vietnam matters arising from or involving the White House. This should minimize potential flaps or embarrassments.

5) We had another small problem coming out of Kissinger's office in the shape of a request for some "area control" maps. In the format and with the labels requested, these maps were inherently misleading and badly distorted the actual situation. The request was of course complied with (though I was careful to ensure that none of the maps sent over bore any reference to CIA). This morning, however, I sent Kissinger a tactful memo outlining the problems inherent in depicting or measuring population and area control and appended a set of maps we devised, addressed to the questions he should have asked.

6) We had one more tricky [ ] report which was sent to Kissinger alone with Rogers' copy held until the White House blesses its passage.

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7) As General Cushman will have reported, on 7 July there was a floating NSC meeting (on the Sequoia) devoted to Vietnam. The brethren collectively worked up his briefing and back up material in the usual way. Wheeler kindly sent us an advance copy of his briefing so discrepancies or major problems could be ironed out in advance. There were none, but this was a helpful gesture.

George A. Carver, Jr.

Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

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